to participate in the development programmes during discussions with the Board, but no specific proposals/suggestions regarding the involvement have been received by the Board. However, the Board is continuing liaison with these agencies.

Power Crisis

2505. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Power Crisis darker days ahead" which appeared in Tribune dated the 26th June, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the power crisis continues to increase and the programme to electrify thousands of far flung villages in remote areas remains a dream; and

(c) whether Government have chalked out any plans to increase the production of power and to meet its demand; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Shortfall in availability of power, though certainly affecting the quality of electricity supply to villages, has limited impact on the programme for electrification of villages which largely depends on the quantum of funds being made available by State for the rural electrification programme.

(c) An action plan has been drawn up by the Ministry of Power to improve the performance of the power sector in a phased manner involving short medium and long term measures, covering both the physical and financial aspects of generation, transmission and distribution of power. These, inter alia, include introduction of improved operating procedures, Renovation and Modernisation of old units, strengthening of Transmission and Distribution system, improving the working of State Electricity Boards and better utilisation of generation by transfer from surplus region to deficit region through inter-regional links.

Hydro-Electric Potential in Karnataka

2506. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment of hydroelectric potential in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps, if any, Government propose to take to harness the potential?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) and (b) The hydroelectric potential of Karnataka assessed by Central Electricity Authority is 4347 MW at 60% load factor. The status of development of HE potential in Karnataka is given below:

	MW at 60% load factor (as on 31.7.1996)
—Assessed potential	4347
—Potential developed	1986
—Potential under-development	644

(c) Some of the measures taken by Government towards harnessing the hydro potential are modification in the financial, administrative and legal procedures to attract private investment, creation of central/joint sector corporation, increase in outlay for development of hydro projects, increase in budgetary allocation for central/joint sector projects and arranging funds for hydro projects through external assistance.

Stopping of Drilling Operations in Bengal Basin

2507. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even after discovery of high quality of oil from

Ichapur-1 and Golf Green-1 Wells, drilling operations have been stopped in the Bengal basin;

(b) if so, when the drilling for Ichapur type of oligocene prospect will be resumed in Ranaghat, the Golf Green type of prospect will be resumed in the vicinity of the hinge zone and Chandkuri type of paleocene prospect will be resumed in Contai area; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir. While in Ichapur-1, non-commercial hydrocarbon indication was found, only traces of oil in water during testing was observed in Golf-Green-1. Currently, drilling operations are continuing in West Bengal for coal-bed methane.

(b) and (c) Drilling of 48 wells (41 in onland and 7 in offshore) have yielded highly discouraging results. However exploratory efforts are being continued by way of 2D and 3D seismic surveys. Simultaneously, the geoscientific data generated so far is being re-assessed. Further exploratory drilling can be taken up only after firming up of the highest quality prospects.

Charges of Corruption Against Ministers

2508. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of allegations of corruption have been made against the Ministers in the new cabinet;

(b) if so, what is the total number of such Ministers;

(c) whether the Prime Minister has enquired into the allegations;

(d) if so, to what extent they have been found true;

(e) what action has been taken on these allegations; and

(f) whether the Prime Minister is considering to replace those Ministers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI. S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) to (f) Based on some Press Report, some complaint has been made against some Minister and the complaint is under scrutiny.

Streamlining the Functioning of Central Electricity Authority

2509. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to streamline the functioning of the Central Electricity Authority;

(b) if so, whether the Committee on Tariff Regulation also proposes to give its recommendations in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard and to what extent the CEA would be made more functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) Steps to steamline the functioning of Central Electricity Authority have been initiated in the Ministry of Power.

(b) Ministry of Power has not constituted any Committee on Tariff Regulations.

(c) The recommendations of a consultant in this regard are awaited, whereafter specific steps would be taken to bring about the requisite changes.

इंदिरा आवास योजना के अन्तर्गत निर्मित किए गए आवास

2510. श्री ओ॰ पी॰ कोहली: क्या ग्रामीण क्षेत्र और रोजगार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के दौरान इंदिरा आवास योजना के अंतर्गत अब तक निर्मित किए गए आवासों की कुल संख्या कितनी है;